

GOVERNOR'S SECURITY DIVISION

The protection of Missouri governors has come a long way since 1881, when Governor Thomas Crittenden kept a .44-caliber Smith and Wesson revolver in his desk drawer. He had offered a \$5,000 reward for the arrest and delivery of Frank and Jesse James, and kept the weapon handy to guard against retaliation. In less than a year, Jesse James had been killed, and in October 1882, Frank James surrendered, handing his .44 Remington revolver to Governor Crittenden in the governor's office.

In 1939, eight years after the creation of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, several troopers were assigned to escort and chauffeur Governor Lloyd Stark, and provide security at the Governor's Mansion for the first family following death threats by Kansas City mobsters. Governor Stark had joined federal authorities in efforts to topple political boss Tom Pendergast. Within a year, Pendergast and 100 of his followers were indicted.

In early 1963, Colonel Hugh Waggoner called Trooper Richard D. Radford into his office one afternoon. He told Tpr. Radford to report to him at 8 a.m. the following morning in civilian clothes. At that time, he would accompany Tpr. Radford to the governor's office. The trooper was introduced to Governor John Dalton and was assigned to full-time security following several threats. Since security for the governor was in its infancy, Tpr. Radford had to develop procedures as he went along. There was no formal protection training available at this time, and the only equipment consisted of a suit, concealed weapon, and an unmarked car. After a couple years, Tpr. Radford was promoted to sergeant. (There was no corporal rank at this time in Patrol history.) He remained in this rank throughout the rest of his assignment with Governor Dalton and both terms with Governor Warren Hearnes.

During a trip with Governor Dalton to Omaha, NE, for the Midwest Governor's Conference, an officer interrupted a luncheon to announce the news that President Kennedy had just been shot. No one was sure of the extent of what was happening, so the conference was canceled and all governors left for their capitols immediately. Captain Radford retired from the Patrol in 1988, as the commander of Troop E.

Governor Hearnes preferred to use aircraft for more travel than previous governors. The Patrol pilots provided air transportation for many flights. On some out-of-state trips the pilot would double as security for the governor. Some of these early pilots were Sergeants Boyd Fredrickson, Bill Turner, Howard Gebhart and Ron Brandt. This practice soon ended during the Hearnes administration. It became apparent that it was safer and more productive to separate pilot and security assignments.

After his election in 1972, Governor-elect Christopher "Kit" Bond became the target of a death threat. Following a nationwide trend, he issued an executive order in 1973 creating a "unit" of officers within the Patrol who would

provide around-the-clock protection. Until the unit could be formed, Troopers Gary Venz and Carroll Plunkett were assigned to provide security.

In April 1973, the Executive Security Unit was formed, with Corporal John Ford as the unit's leader. The other original members of the unit included Troopers Jack Merritt, Ron Smith, Clint Carlyle, Bob Gibson, Mike Pace, and Chris Ricks. The organizational structure placed the unit within the Criminal Investigation Division, and was overseen by Lieutenant C.C. "Hap" Maddox.

John Ford was promoted to sergeant not long after the unit started, and Bob Gibson was promoted to corporal. Also, Jack Merritt left the detail, and Tom Taylor and Dave Hart came in, bringing the detail to eight members.

When John Ford was promoted to lieutenant in the Criminal Investigation Division, Sergeant Walt Ruegg took over as detail's leader. Then, in 1981, Sgt. Ruegg transferred to the Auto Theft section, and Sergeant Chris Ricks became detail's leader.

In 1981, Colonel Alan Whitmer made changes to the structure of the Patrol. One of these changes placed the Executive Security Unit within the Office of Professional Standards. In 1982, Colonel Whitmer retired from the Patrol, and the Executive Security Unit went back to the Criminal Investigation Division.

When the Division of Drug and Crime Control was formed by statute in 1983, the Executive Security Unit became the Governor's Security Division within the newly created Criminal Investigation Bureau. At that time, the division had an office at General Headquarters near the major's office, in the area now (2006) occupied by the Field Operations Bureau. The organizational structure has remained the same since, with the director of the Governor's Security Division reporting directly to the commander (major by rank) of the Criminal Investigation Bureau. In 1988, Sergeant Ricks was promoted, and became the first division director to hold the rank of lieutenant. In 1989, Lieutenant Ricks transferred, and Sergeant Tom Taylor was made division director and promoted to lieutenant. Lieutenant Taylor later became president of the National Governor's Security Association.

In 1999 the state of Missouri hosted the National Governor's Association summer conference in St. Louis. This event was a huge success due in large part to the Patrol's involvement in providing protection and service to approximately 45 governors and their families.

On October 16, 2000, Governor Mel Carnahan, his son Randy, and Chief of Staff Chris Sifford, were killed in a plane crash. The plane's pilot was Randy Carnahan. It was the usual practice of the division to have a member on the plane with the governor. However, due to the division being pressed to the limit of its manpower, we were spared the death of a member. Governor Carnahan was running for the U.S. Senate, barnstorming several cities, and the presidential debates were scheduled for the next day in St. Louis. Division members were waiting for the governor in New Madrid, after the governor was put on the plane in St. Louis, and it took off in stormy weather. When the governor's plane did not

arrive on time, inquiries with FAA officials eventually determined their plane had crashed in Jefferson County.

Division members responded to the crash site to assist with the investigation that night. Other members gathered the family in St. Louis and rushed them to the Governor's Mansion in Jefferson City. Positive identification of the remains took considerable time, and the medical examiner refused to issue a death certificate until positive identification could be made. Therefore, state officials could only declare the governor incapacitated and appoint Lt. Governor Roger Wilson acting governor that night. The division immediately began protection of Roger Wilson upon his agreement.

The next day, Roger Wilson became governor after positive identification was made of Mel Carnahan's remains. Due to these circumstances, all governors and their families are now fingerprinted and have DNA samples taken by the division. Members of the Governor's Security Division served as pallbearers for Governor Carnahan and his son Randy.

After the death of Governor Carnahan, the division experienced its most challenging and stressful period of time. The governor's wife, Jean Carnahan, was officially no longer Missouri's first lady, but due to the timing of Governor Carnahan's death, his name remained on the ballot for U.S. Senator. Governor Wilson announced he would appoint Jean Carnahan as Missouri's Senator to fill the seat should her deceased husband be elected.

However, under the Constitution, this appointment could not be made until the date he would have been sworn in. Therefore, she held no official office, but Colonel Weldon Wilhoit ordered the division to continue protection duties until she was sworn in as a U.S. Senator. This necessitated members of the division spending a great amount of time in Washington, D.C. The division fulfilled its primary duty of providing security for Governor Roger Wilson and his family. In addition to all these duties, the division immediately assumed security duties for Governor-elect Bob Holden. This tremendous workload required members of the division often to work 16-hour shifts, even on leave days, for extended periods of time.

As were other divisions and troops, the Governor's Security Division was challenged again in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Upon learning of the attacks, division members transported Governor Holden to the Emergency Operations Center at SEMA. As all members were called to duty that morning, rumors of attacks on other state capitols including Springfield, IL, were being circulated. The division took immediate steps to fortify the Governor's Mansion by blocking entrances with vehicles. Of course, the rumors were proven incorrect, but a much more heightened state of security and alertness was put in place at Missouri's Capitol, the Governor's Mansion, and other state office buildings. Across the country, the size of governor's security details increased by 25 percent as a result of these attacks.

As a result of the 9/11 attacks, two members of the division were called up for active military duty. At this same time, the division was reeling with the

effects of overtime related to keeping up with the extremely active family of Governor Bob Holden, including two young school age boys. In order to meet these demands, a contingent of 12 "reserve officers" from different divisions within GHQ were trained in executive protection and assigned to temporary governor's security duties, being called in as needed.

In 2002, the Governor's Security Division and the Training Division hosted and presented the first executive protection school at the Patrol Academy. Agencies from around the United States and Missouri attended the course.

In 2005, the 93rd General Assembly passed, and Governor Matt Blunt signed, the law creating the Governor's Security Division within the Highway Patrol. The law directs the Patrol, under Chapter 43, to provide transportation, security, and protection for the governor and the governor's immediate family.

Members of the Governor's Security Division receive specialized training in executive protection through the United States Secret Service and other states. Training includes evasive driving techniques, special firearms training, advance procedures for routes and event sites, cover and evacuation procedures, etc. All officers are trained in flying armed on commercial aircraft. Members of the division travel with the governor and his family to locations around the world.

Specialized equipment used today has advanced much since the birth of the division. When the unit first started, the members had no portable radios or other special equipment. In fact, when the unit went on its first National Governor's Association conference in Seattle in 1973, they had to borrow portable radios from the University of Missouri Police Department. Later they were issued Motorola walkie-talkies, which were large and bulky, and seldom worked. Along with other specialized equipment, all members are now equipped with the latest portable radios, programmed with frequencies capable of interoperability anywhere in the United States.

In the beginning, division members were issued Smith & Wesson .357 magnum revolvers with 2 1/2 inch barrels. In 1990, as the rest of the Patrol transitioned to the Glock model 22, the division went to the Glock model 23, a compact version of the .40-caliber pistol. They were issued ASP expandable batons and received special training long before the rest of the Patrol received them.

Over the years, many members of the Patrol have been assigned to protecting and serving the governor and first family. They have tirelessly held themselves to standards befitting the Patrol. They are often reminded they are the most personal contact the highest officials of our state and other dignitaries will have in forming an impression of the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Today, all 50 states have security details within their highway patrol, state police, or department of public safety. The Patrol's Governor's Security Division is a member of the National Governor's Security Association, which gives the Patrol reciprocity, cooperation, and recognition by other states and the United States Secret Service.